

The Reef Watcher

February 2002, Issue 6.1

Editors ~ Katie Rouse & Catherine Tait



WHAT'S ON AT REEF WATCH?

The summer of 2002 is proving to be a very busy one here at Reef Watch. There are a number of opportunities coming up for you to get involved in Reef Watch, including monitoring dives, training sessions and our annual **Marathon Dive**. Your involvement not only helps protect the marine environment, but also enables you to improve your knowledge of SA's temperate marine life and develop marine monitoring skills. Regardless of your level of experience, there is something for everyone.

ANNUAL MARATHON DIVE, SUNDAY 10TH MARCH AT PT. NOARLUNGA.

This dive enables us to obtain data on the whole reef in a single day, which can then be compared with data obtained over previous years. To do this we require lots of divers, snorkellers, and general helpers on the day. Contact Chris Ball at Reef Watch for further information and/or to register for the day. Cheap air fills available. Free BBQ.

MONITORING DIVES/SNORKELS

- Saturday 2nd March at Second Valley
- Sunday 24th March at Port Noarlunga
- Saturday 13th April at Moana
- Sunday 28th April at Port Noarlunga
- Saturday 11th May at Hallett Cove
- Sunday 26th May at Second Valley

Contact Chris Ball on 8223 5155 or at info@reefwatch.asn.au for more information.

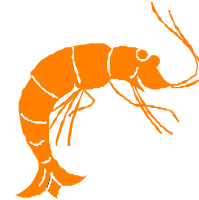


INTRODUCTION TO REEF WATCH TRAINING SESSION

These sessions provides divers and snorkellers with information on the monitoring techniques used by Reef Watch. The session also helps to introduce participants to some of the more common fish, invertebrates and algae likely to be found during monitoring dives.

- Wednesday 27th Feb at 6:30pm
- Tuesday 26th March at 6.30pm
- Wednesday 1st May at 6.30pm

Contact Chris Ball for more information and/or to book a place.



MARINE ALGAE & INVERTEBRATES ID WORKSHOP

If you've ever wanted to know more about the algae and invertebrates you encounter in our coastal waters, this workshop is for you. Training will be largely hands-on in small groups, led by experienced trainers.

- Sunday 3rd March 2002 between 9:30am and 4:00pm.
Conducted at SARDI Aquatic Sciences 2 Hamra Ave, West Beach
COST: \$30 waged or \$15 unwaged

To book you place contact Chris Ball at Reef Watch. Some places are still available, so be quick!

“FERAL OR IN PERIL” PROJECT

Coastal development, industrial pollution, destructive fishing methods and the introduction of pest species into South Australian waters are having significant impacts on marine habitats. This project aims to address these issues by collecting data for a number of threatened temperate marine species in SA, and by collating information on the abundance and distribution of species within SA waters. This information will be provided to management agencies to determine appropriate management responses. Due to the potentially aggressive and harmful nature of introduced species on the native marine environment, we will also be looking for a number of invasive species and collating and assessing the data on these species.

REGIONAL REEF WATCH GROUPS

Reef Watch is working to establish regional groups to monitor local reefs. A Hallett Cove group has been set up in conjunction with the City of Marion, and plans are underway to establish a Reef Watch group in cooperation with the City of Noarlunga. If you're interested in being involved or have ideas of your own, please contact Chris Ball.

WHAT'S ON AROUND SA?

SEAWEEK

Seaweeek is a national initiative of the Marine Education Society of Australasia (MESA) and is run every year in March. Seaweeek 2002 is March 10th-17th and the theme this year is 'Diving Deeper'. The MESA website – www.mesa.edu.au is a one-stop-shop for registration for Seaweeek, the 2002 National Conference (see below) as well as free resources for educators and links to other similar and useful sites. Please contact SA representative Alex Gaut for further information regarding MESA: octopus@picknowl.com.au or 0418 921 849.

MESA NATIONAL CONFERENCE

“Plunge the Depths of Marine Education” on the 13th and 14th April 2002 at SARDI Aquatic Centre, 2 Hamra Ave, West Beach. The first day of activities include seminars on our Great Whites, living systems in the Gulf, and environmental learning. There is also a field trip to either the Australian Fisheries Academy and The School of Fish, or the Marine Discovery Centre and St Kilda Mangroves. A beach party closes the first day of activities. Day 2 includes seminars on Reef Watch and the Jewels of the Sea Project, before departing for Rapid Bay for an afternoon of snorkelling or diving and activities around Victor Harbour. You will need to register before the 5th of April 2002. For all enquiries, please contact Anne Pomeroy, Conference Secretariat on (08) 8266 2779, or email: divingdeeper@annepomeroy.com

ENVIRONMENT INSTITUTE OF AUSTRALIA (SA) SEMINAR

Are Adelaide's Coastal Resources Sustainable?

This seminar brings together speakers from a variety of disciplines to address the question: Are Adelaide's Coastal Resources Sustainable? They will discuss topics including educating our children about the marine environment, the role of local government and the community, sea grass losses and the Adelaide Coastal Waters Study.



Where: SA Aquatic Sciences Centre, West Beach
When: 9th April 2002
Cost: \$50 for members (rates apply for students/conc. and non-members)

For further information or to register for the seminar, contact Felicity Alexander at felicity.alexander@sawater.com.au or phone 8204 1670.

MARINE PROTECTED AREAS & MARINE PLANNING

A Marine Protected Area (MPA) or Marine National Park is most commonly defined as:

'...any area of intertidal or subtidal terrain, together with its overlying water and associated flora, fauna, historical and cultural features, which has been reserved by law or other effective means to protect part or all of the enclosed environment.'

Following some years of consultation with key stakeholders and community bodies, the State Government released in December 2001 a draft vision and policy document on a South Australian Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (SARSMPA). The draft vision and policy document, "Marine Protected Areas – A Shared Vision" states in part:

"In recognition of the unique nature of our marine environment and mounting evidence of change caused through our actions, the South Australian Government is committed to conserving our marine and estuarine biodiversity, while providing for the ecologically sustainable use of our marine resources. As a result *Our Seas and Coasts – A Marine and Estuarine Strategy for SA* was released in 1998 as a framework for integrated management. The Strategy identifies five major commitments. These are: *Clean Healthy Seas, Sustainable Use, Conserving Biodiversity and Heritage, Working Together* and *Better Understanding*.



While MPAs are a selected tool for the conservation of marine biodiversity, they do not in themselves ensure that all marine conservation objectives are being met. The *Sustainable Use* commitment of *Our Seas and Coasts* is being supported with the recent marine planning framework initiative. Marine planning is the development of principles, objectives and a zoning scheme to guide the use of the marine environment. Areas where economic, social and environmental values require significant recognition and consideration will be identified. This will assist in ensuring that all of the marine environment is used in an equitable and ecologically sustainable manner.

The eight bioregions of South Australia's marine environment have been grouped into six regions. A marine plan will be developed for each region, starting with the Spencer Gulf. The community in partnership with Government will develop these plans. Areas identified as requiring consideration due to their high conservation values will then be

examined for their suitability as part of the South Australian Representative System of Marine Protected Areas (SARMPA).”

The Adelaide branch of the Australian Marine Conservation Society has recently released a pamphlet entitled “Take the Plunge...You can help protect our Marine National Parks” (an alternative term for MPAs), in which it argues that:

“Marine National Parks, if properly managed, can help to protect and manage our unique marine environment into the future. They fulfil many roles, among them:

- help protect vital marine habitats and their biodiversity;
- benefit fisheries, by protecting vital spawning and nursery habitats, recovering over-fished populations and increasing the number and size of fish available to fishers;
- protect rare and endangered species;
- protect valuable cultural sites, and areas of outstanding natural beauty; and
- provide undisturbed places for recreation/tourism, education and research.

All states are now committed to establishing the National Representative System of Marine Protected Areas. In South Australia, this implies an expansion of our marine national parks, which currently cover less than 4% of South Australia’s marine environment. Unfortunately activities such as mining and fishing are often permitted in marine national parks, posing a threat to delicate marine and coastal habitats, flora and fauna. We must ensure that marine national parks are managed in a way that safeguards habitats and biodiversity.

The Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS) supports the protection of at least 15% of the state’s waters in Marine National Parks”

During January and February, the State government held a series of public consultation sessions on the draft vision and policy document. The public now have until **31st March** to make submissions on the draft. The document can be viewed online at the following websites:

- Department of Environment and Heritage: www.environment.sa.gov.au/coasts
- Primary Industries and Resources: www.pir.sa.gov.au

Copies of “Marine Protected Areas – A Shared Vision” and AMCS’ pamphlet “Take the Plunge” are also available from the Conservation Council at 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide.

AMCS is holding a meeting for anyone interested in developing a submission on MPA’s **at 5.30pm on Thursday 14 March** at the Conservation Council. Please RSVP to Chris Ball at the Conservation Council on 8223 5155.

SA NEWS

SA ~ FLEURIEU ARTIFICIAL REEF PROJECT- OVERVIEW

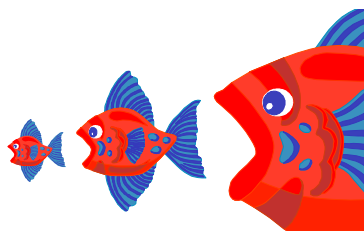
<http://www.dive-southaustralia.com/diving/index.html>

An artificial reef is being created in Yankalilla Bay, South Australia, using one of the last of the true destroyers, the ex-HMAS Hobart. It is hoped that the retired vessel will enhance marine life and provide a premier eco-tourism diving site for the region. Yankalilla Bay has been chosen for a number of reasons including year round visibility, and the absence of natural reefs within the immediate area. The site, which will be designated as a marine reserve, also has the added benefit of being outside navigational and commercial fishing areas. There are many biodiversity and ecological advantages of an artificial reef. It will improve the marine flora and fauna in a low productivity area, provide shelter for adult and juvenile fish and contribute to an increase in biodiversity in surrounding waters. To prepare the ship for scuttling, all scrap metal will be stripped, all toxic materials removed, the external hull cleaned and sections of the upper superstructure removed. The final preparation process has been more time consuming than originally envisaged (in order to comply with EPA standards), and it is therefore necessary to delay the scuttling process to a later date.

SA ~ SPEARGUNS BANNED ON CITY BEACHES

SA Advertiser 2/2/02

People using a hand spear or spear gun along Adelaide's metropolitan beaches risk fines of up to \$2500, PIRSA Fisheries says. Fishery compliance officers are issuing cautions, \$50 on-the-spot fines for "minor" offences and reporting more serious offences, which may attract a \$2500 fine in court. Acting general manager of Fisheries Services Trent Rusby said yesterday the ban was to protect vulnerable reef fish from over-exploitation and to avoid the danger to swimmers of spear-fishers using the same area. "The use of a hand spear or spear gun is prohibited in the area bounded by the southern Outer Harbour breakwater and Onkaparinga Head, ...at Port Noarlunga," Mr Rusby said. "The closure applies to 600m out to sea."



SA GROUPS/ORGANISATIONS

MARINE EDUCATION SOCIETY OF AUSTRALASIA INC.

www.mesa.edu.au

MESA acts on behalf of its members to promote appreciation and understanding of the marine environment through excellence in education. The Society provides a national forum and advocacy on marine education and encourages international initiatives in this field. MESA is working through education to achieve the sustainable use of our seas from their catchments to the deep oceans. This national professional organisation was formed in 1985 and operates on a non-profit basis through its council, State and regional representatives. It operates in all Australian States and Territories. MESA provides opportunities for professional development and engagement in marine education issues through its annual conferences.

MARINE LIFE SOCIETY OF SA

<http://www.mlssa.asn.au>

The Marine Life Society of South Australia originated as a marine study group with the SA Museum. Its focus is on public education through its publications, calendars, web page, aquarium displays and photographic index of SA marine life. The Society publishes a monthly Newsletter and an annual Journal. Information about the Society's marine life calendar may also be seen on its web page. Society members enjoy many things associated with our local marine life including snorkelling, scuba diving, underwater photography and studying our marine environment. The group is affiliated with other organisations such as the Conservation Council of SA, the Threatened Species Network and the Scuba Divers Federation of SA. General Meetings are held at the Conservation Centre, 120 Wakefield Street, Adelaide at 7.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of each month except December. MLSSA has close links with Dragon Search and Reef Watch, having been involved in the founding of both projects. New members are most welcome to join MLSSA by completing a subscription form on their web page.

SCUBA DIVERS FEDERATION OF SA

The Scuba Divers Federation of South Australia is the State association of SA scuba diving clubs. The main aim of the Federation is to promote safe, recreational scuba diving. Meetings of delegates from member clubs are held on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 8pm. Our AGMs are held every July when a new executive committee is elected from the club delegates. Clubs may send two voting delegates along to our

monthly meetings. Artificial reefs, diving standards and fishing regulations are major issues with delegates. We have been holding an annual dive rally at Aldinga Beach but concerns over public liability insurance have postponed this year's event at present. We publish our own monthly newsheet which at present is only produced in electronic form. For more info please contact Steve Reynolds at reynolds.stephen@bigpond.com

THREATENED SPECIES NETWORK

www.wwf.org.au/tsn.

The Threatened Species Network (TSN) is a community-based program of the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Endangered Species Program of the Natural Heritage Trust. The TSN aims to increase community awareness of and involvement in the recovery of threatened species and their habitats across Australia. The TSN has been linked to Reef Watch through the TSN's interest in the conservation of marine species, its partnership in the Dragon Search (SA) program and through a TSN Community Grant received for the 'Feral or in Peril' project by Reef Watch in 2000.

COASTCARE

Sam Penney, Coastcare State Coordinator, Department of Environment and Heritage:
penney.sam@saugov.sa.gov.au

Coastcare aims to improve the management of our coasts and marine environment through facilitating the involvement of communities in valuable local projects. It is a partnership program in which community participation is actively supported by the Commonwealth, State and Local governments. Through the network of Coastcare Facilitators, a wide range of resources, including funding, are available to community groups to enable the improved protection and management of coastal and marine areas. Since the inception of Coastcare in 1995, the program has funded over 1300 projects around Australia (see the following website for more details:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/marine/coastcare/index.html>).



DRAGON SEARCH

www.dragonsearch.asn.au

'Dragon Search' is a monitoring program, which encourages members of the community to provide information about sightings of the unique southern Australian fish - the seadragon. The information will be used to determine the distribution, habitat requirements and research and management priorities for these little-known species. Anyone who visits the beach can get involved. For more information phone Jeremy Gramp Dragon Search (SA) on (08) 8223 5155.

AUSTRALIAN MARINE CONSERVATION SOCIETY

<http://www.amcs.org.au/>

Since its formation in 1965, the Australian Marine Conservation Society (AMCS) has become a recognised authority on marine and aquatic conservation and environmental education. It is widely used as a source of expertise and information by government agencies, politicians, media and the general public, both in Australia and abroad. It has produced numerous surveys, reports and studies for both state and federal government and has played a key role in raising environmental awareness in the community. The establishment of the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park in 1975 was due substantially to the Society's efforts. AMCS is keen to promote the development of a national approach to marine and coastal management, involving governments, industry and every sector of the community.

MARINE AND COASTAL COMMUNITY NETWORK

<http://www.mccn.org.au/>

The Marine & Coastal Community Network is a national, non-government, community-based organisation with one Regional Coordinator in each State and the Northern Territory. They promote a more cooperative and coordinated approach to marine and coastal planning and management by bringing together all the interest groups - individuals, community organisations, government agencies, industry, researchers and educators. The MCCN provides a range of resources to help groups and individuals better understand the activities and issues that affect marine and coastal environments. Community participation in marine and coastal planning and management is also encouraged.

USEFUL REEF WATCHER LINKS...

Many organisations are involved in caring for our reefs, coasts and oceans. Below you will find information on, and links to, some of the key organisations.

AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF MARINE SCIENCE.

<http://www.aims.gov.au/index-ie.html>

The Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS) was established by the Commonwealth government in 1972 to generate the knowledge needed for the sustainable use and protection of the marine environment through innovative, world-class scientific and technological research. AIMS has produced a series of new reef resources online features about box jellyfish, crown-of-thorn starfish, coral bleaching, remotely sensed submerged reefs, estuary ecosystems and coastal monitoring.

CO-OPERATIVE RESEARCH CENTRES

CRC for The Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area

<http://www.reef.crc.org.au/index.html>

The list of current CRC Reef projects is available on the website, and include coral bleaching, crown-of-thorns starfish, water quality, biodiversity, the development of sustainable fisheries, aquaculture, and tourism. The Reef CRC has produced a new brochure on the impact of changes in water quality, as a result of changing land use run-off from the land, to the Great Barrier Reef World Heritage Area. Debate surrounding the issue has often been ill-informed because of the complexity of the issues, the scattered state of relevant studies, and the steady stream of new research.

CRC for Coastal Zone, Estuary and Waterway Management

<http://www.coastal.crc.org.au/>

The Coastal CRC provides decision-making tools and knowledge necessary for the effective management and ecosystem health of Australia's coastal zone, estuaries and waterways. Their goal is to bridge the gaps between science, the community and policy making organisations. Initially they have focussed on three management study areas; a major agricultural catchment at the Fitzroy River, a major industrial catchment at Port Curtis, and a major urban catchment at Brisbane River and Moreton Bay. A National Estuary Audit involving an assessment on the condition of more than 900 estuaries around Australia is also being conducted.

CRC for Antarctica and the Southern Ocean

<http://www.antcrc.utas.edu.au/antcrc/>

The Cooperative Research Centre for Antarctica and the Southern was established in 1991 and is now one of the largest research organisations in the world concerned with polar regions. The research sub-programs of the Centre are designed to characterise the oceanic and atmospheric circulations of the south polar region, their interaction with sea ice and the continental ice-sheet, their relation to global environmental change and their relation to biological productivity. They are designed to establish baselines of natural variability from geologic and paleo-environmental records both onshore and offshore Antarctica. Research on the political and legal aspects of the overall regime is also a focus.

OTHER USEFUL SITES:

CSIRO

<http://www.csiro.au/index.asp?type=sector&id=Marine>

NATIONAL OCEANS OFFICE

<http://www.oceans.gov.au>

ENVIRONMENT AUSTRALIA

<http://www.ea.gov.au>

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND HERITAGE – COASTS & MARINE

<http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/coasts/index.html>

PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND RESOURCES SA (PIRSA)

<http://www.pir.sa.gov.au>

AUSTRALIAN CONSERVATION FOUNDATION

<http://www.acfonline.org.au/>

WORLDWIDE FUND FOR NATURE (WWF)

<http://www.wwf.org.au/>

**SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE (SARDI) -
AQUATIC SCIENCES** <http://www.sardi.sa.gov.au/>



Reef Watch Community Monitoring Program
Conservation Council of South Australia Inc.
120 Wakefield St, Adelaide, S.A. 5153
Phone: (08) 8223 5155 Fax: (08) 8232 4782

Email: info@reefwatch.asn.au Website: www.reefwatch.asn.au

If undeliverable return to:
Reef Watch
Conservation Council of SA Inc.
120 Wakefield St, Adelaide 5000

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If you have any news, stories, anecdotes, etc. which may be of interest to Reef Watcher readers please forward to Chris Ball by fax to (08) 8232 4782, by email to info@reefwatch.asn.au or by post to 120 Wakefield St, Adelaide 5153.

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